

April 17, 2000

CALFED's Fishery Priorities

The fishing organizations listed below urge that the following objectives be accomplished by the end of Phase One of CALFED's Plan to restore the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary, thereby helping to ensure an equitable CALFED process for the public's fishery and aquatic resources that comprise the estuary's ecosystem.

1. The achievement of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act's goal of doubling the populations of Central Valley salmon, steelhead, striped bass, shad and sturgeon through natural production from their average population levels that existed between 1967 to 1992. This goal should be achieved in each stream system tributary to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
2. Restoration of the aquatic habitat necessary to obtain naturally producing, self-sustaining populations of all anadromous species of fish in the Central Valley, including runs in the San Joaquin River. To assist in achieving this goal, an Environmental Water Account should be established that provides an additional 600,000 acre feet of flow, on average, over those supplied to the estuary under current state and federal mandates. This increase in fresh water is to be used to provide timely flows through the Delta into Suisun and Honker Bays for fishery habitat and the food web necessary for the recovery of the estuary's fisheries. The 600,000 acre feet of water should be obtained through a reduction in the amount of water exported from the Delta.
3. A CALFED commitment to obtain multiple year appropriations to provide funding for CALFED's Ecosystem Restoration Program that is estimated to cost \$100 million annually. This effort is critical to the ongoing process of establishing fishery and habitat restoration programs.
4. CALFED advocacy for the legislative enactment of a mandatory statewide water conservation program that requires a 15% reduction in the amount of water currently used in the state. This would provide some six million acre feet of addition supply to meet the needs of water users, the environment, and the states fishery resources while significantly reducing the amount of water exported from the estuary. The primary objective of this conservation program should be to reduce demand in areas importing water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds.

5. A thirty percent reduction in the number of anadromous fish destroyed by state and federal water export pumping plants in the Delta to be accomplished by operational and physical modifications to the project facilities, with additional reductions of fishery losses in future phases of the CALFED program.
6. Screening of all the unscreened diversions in the estuary and its tributaries that are detrimental to fishery resources.
7. The immediate development of groundwater storage south of the Delta to provide the operational flexibility necessary to curtail Delta exports during critical fishery periods. Such storage should be a component of the Environmental Water Account and it should be administered accordingly.
8. Significant improvement in the estuary's water quality to restore the productivity of the aquatic ecosystem. In addition to reducing pollution from point sources, such actions should also include preventing agricultural return flows from degrading the estuary's water quality through enforcement of the law, reducing toxicity at its source and developing water reclamation and reuse programs.

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